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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/670,337	09/26/2003	Masayuki Suzuki	117330	5129
25944	7590	06/14/2005	EXAMINER	
OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC			HOANG, TU BA	
P.O. BOX 19928				
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3742	

DATE MAILED: 06/14/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/670,337	SUZUKI ET AL.
	Examiner Tu Ba Hoang	Art Unit 3742

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM
THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 26 September 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3/18, 4/02, 8/04/04.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____.

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Priority

Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Drawings

Figures 7 and 8 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g). Corrected drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the following reference sign(s) mentioned in the description: 20 and 21 as recited in the abstract. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

Title of the Invention: See 37 CFR 1.72(a) and MPEP § 606. The title of the invention should be brief but technically accurate and descriptive, preferably from two to seven words may not contain more than 500 characters.

The title of the invention is too long. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because each of the reference numbers should be placed within the parenthesis or to be deleted. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:
The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claim 1, the term "power element" recited at line 2 renders the claim indefinite. Where applicant acts as his or her own lexicographer to specifically define a term of a

claim to its ordinary meaning, the written description must clearly define the claim term and set forth the common definition so as to put one reasonably skilled in the art on notice that the applicant intended to so define that claim term. Therefore, it is suggested to replace "a power element" with "an electrical power". The word "heated" following the recitation of "heater" at line 2 should be deleted since the heater itself is for heating or generating heat but not to be heated by or based on any other means such as the AC power source recited at line 3. It is clear that the AC power source is for providing electrical power such as voltage or current to the heater. Similarly, the recitation of "the heater being heated by said supplying unit" recited at lines 8-9 renders the claim indefinite because the supplying unit is clearly for "supplying" or providing but not for heating while the heater itself is for providing heat or itself is heated. It is suggested that the phrase "being heated by said applying unit" to be deleted for avoiding confusion. (It is also noted that proper corrections in the specification are also suggested).

Similarly, in claim 2, the term "power element" should be replaced with "electrical power". The phrases "that heats the heater" recited at line 3 and "being heated by the AC power source" recited at lines 8-9 should be deleted.

Similar changes are also suggested for claims 3-4.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure: Nagashima et al (JP 2000-260716) discloses an exhaust gas treatment equipment with the deterioration of a heater is based on the detection of the resistance of the heater.

Claim 1 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action.

Claims 2-18 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

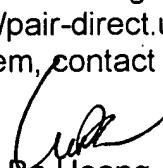
The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: while the prior art of record, in particularly, Aoki (US 5,656,190) cited by the Applicants discloses a controller for a heater in which the deterioration of the heater can be avoided or controlled is based on the measured resistance of the heater within a predetermined limit. However, the prior art of record does not show or fairly suggest the use of a finding unit that finds the deterioration degree of the heater based on the resistance of the heater at the inspection time (calculated by a calculating unit based on the detected results of a voltage detector and current detector at the inspection time) and the resistance of the heater at a reference time (calculated by a unit based on the detected result of a temperature detector and a temperature coefficient of resistance stored on a memory unit) in a manner recited in claim 1 .

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tu Ba Hoang whose telephone number is (571) 272-4780. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-fri from 8:30AM to 6:00PM.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robin Evans can be reached on (571) 272-4777. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Tu Da Hoang
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3742

May 08, 2005